

400,000 rape kits and capture the rapists.

The Department of Justice must live up to its name. Enforce the SAFER Act and follow the law. The Department of Justice must ensure justice for victims. Until then, many rape victims see no justice.

Our country deserves better; sexual assault victims deserve better; and, Mr. Speaker, justice deserves better. Because, justice is what we do in this country.

And that is just the way it is.

ANTIQUITIES ACT ABUSE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from California (Mr. LAMALFA) for 5 minutes.

Mr. LAMALFA. Mr. Speaker, last week, the President announced his plans to designate, once again, over 300,000 acres, this time of mountains, meadows, and other areas that stretch over 100 miles in northern California, including parts of Yolo, Solano, Napa, Lake, Mendocino, Glenn, and Colusa Counties, as a monument.

This designation now marks the 19th time this President has created or expanded, since taking office, resulting in over 260 million acres of designated lands and waters in monuments or wilderness areas.

This move actually exemplifies the President's complete disregard for the legislative process and his lack of hesitation on using every single political tool to carry out even more of his executive power grabs.

Indeed, the one in Snow Mountain was a bipartisan effort underway, with legislators working on how that might become a designated area. Instead, that has now been usurped by one more round of executive power, kind of like we have seen recently with the Supreme Court exercising its power usurping the legislative process where we, the legislators, are subject directly to we, the people.

Using the Antiquities Act as justification to designate over a third of a million acres in my State overnight is not only a serious abuse of power, it is a serious misrepresentation of the intent of the law itself. This law, the purpose of this law, which was enacted after archeologists years ago noticed small artifacts disappearing or ending up in private collections across different countries, was meant as an emergency option to curb looting in small archeological sites in the Southwest.

The short and what would seem like simple text of the law actually directs the President to limit any designation to the smallest area compatible with proper care and management of the resource or the objects to be protected.

Now, when you see 330,000 acres designated here or 700,000 designated in Nevada or, a few years ago, when President Clinton declared 1 million acres in Utah, are we really protecting a par-

ticular area or zone or is this a widespread power grab?

Indeed, what are we protecting it from? Well, you will hear from the left, from oil and gas development, from timber, from mining, or from all sorts of things that would be devastating to the environment.

Have you noticed how hard it is to get a permit to do any one of those things, by the time you get through the EPA, U.S. Fish and Wildlife, and the whole litany of others that are in the way of doing things that could be done with good environmental stewardship at the same time as developing the resources that people in this country still need? They still need fuel; they still need oil; they still need gas; they still need paper products. Heaven knows, we use enough paper products in this building.

But we need development in this country. We do it more responsibly than anywhere else in the world. Yet these wilderness area designations, these monuments, they don't seek to really protect anything. They just make it off limits to all Americans, even if you just want to go in for hiking or hunting or a little off-roading and, indeed, those that would develop the resources.

This is so absurd, it even has made it difficult for fire suppression in our forested areas, for our various fire agencies to go do the job they need to do, to have the roads in the areas that are needed so they can attack the fires.

And even more so, as we have seen what happened with the loss of life with illegal immigrants in this country, like Kathryn Steinle in San Francisco, illegal immigration, the effort to stop that at the border was made even more difficult, I believe, down in New Mexico when the President designated a bunch of the area along New Mexico as a monument, making it where the Border Patrol can't even patrol the areas because it is now an environmentally protected zone. That is ridiculous, and I think Americans, when they hear about this, say, "What is going on?"

So this is, again, a power grab that is completely inappropriate. It bypasses the legislative process where the legislators are directly accountable to the people.

It is about time that we change the Antiquities Act, or at least if we had somebody in the White House that knew the balance between designating just a small area that actually helps protect a resource and archaeological site versus hundreds of thousands or millions of acres that makes it just off limits to the type of use the public needs and actually makes the assets a safer and healthier one, for example, with our forests, where we can do the work that needs to be done to keep them healthy.

Local residents have very little input, if any, on a designation happening in their backyard. Is this a transparent process? No.

It is power in Washington, once again, ruling over the people, ruling over the stakeholders in those communities that know best how to manage the resource, what that resource needs, and what that could mean to the local economy, whether it is hunting or fishing or hiking, off-roading, even a little gold mining.

We can do these things. We know how to do them environmentally responsibly, and yet we get run over time and time again by left-leaning folks using the Antiquities Act as something for their environmental dreams.

Mr. Speaker, I am highly frustrated by this, and I hope the American public will get behind an effort to help us change the Antiquities Act and make it something that actually works for the American public and protects what needs protecting, not everything else.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess until 2 p.m. today.

Accordingly (at 12 o'clock and 23 minutes p.m.), the House stood in recess.

□ 1400

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. DENHAM) at 2 p.m.

PRAYER

The Chaplain, the Reverend Patrick J. Conroy, offered the following prayer:

We give You thanks, O God, for giving us another day.

We ask Your blessing upon this assembly and upon all to whom the authority of government is given.

Encourage the Members of this House, O God, to use their abilities and talents in ways that bring righteousness to this Nation and to all people. Ever remind them of the needs of the poor, the homeless or forgotten, and those who live without freedom or liberty. May they be instruments of justice for all Americans.

May Your spirit live with them and with each of us, and may Your grace surround us and those we love that, in all things, we may be the people You would have us be in service to this great Nation.

May all that is done within the people's House this day be for Your great honor and glory.

Amen.

THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair has examined the Journal of the last day's proceedings and announces to the House his approval thereof.

Pursuant to clause 1, rule I, the Journal stands approved.